

Testimony of Alicia Nixon
Student at Common Ground High School,
358 Springside Avenue, New Haven, CT 06515
Testimony submitted to the Appropriations Committee
March 24th, 2011

Honorable Chairs, Members of the Appropriation Committee:

My name is Alicia Nixon and I am a Junior at Common Ground Charter High School (CGHS) in New Haven CT. Charter schools receive \$9,300 for every student but other public schools receive about \$14,000, which upsets me because my high school and many more charter schools have so many opportunities for students to realize their goals for the future. CGHS is a charter school that is just as important as a public school. Every child who attends this charter school or any other charter school should be equally valued to a child who attends a public school. Children who attend a charter school should not be seen differently just because they are going to a different type of school: every child deserves an education and an education equal to that of their peers, so why are charter schools being treated differently when all schools contain children who need to be educated?

Common Ground has really helped me become a better person and to have a better future. Common Ground is a Charter school that focuses on the environment and how people can change the world. Before I came to high school, I was a 14 year old who was afraid to progress, but when I came to Common Ground, there were students who welcomed me and helped me find my way around school. This charter school is not just a regular high school: Common Ground is a place where everyone is welcomed and accepted as a family, where the teachers get to know every student's voice. More schools should be like this charter school because Common Ground High school helps ensure that there are educators who devote their time to making sure students are equipped with the information and classwork they do not understand. Teachers at Common Ground are very adept at helping students be comfortable asking questions when they need help in and outside of the class, students do not need to not be afraid to ask a question. Common Ground has after school programs to catch up on homework and also has all different types of games to play afterschool: basketball, volley ball, floor hockey, ping pong, and board games are just a few activities for CGHS students!

Common Ground is a school where I feel safe, and I have made friends who will always bond over the experiences we have had as teenagers, our memories will last us a lifetime. But with the funding that Common Ground is currently receiving, (only \$9,300 per child) I worry that future students will not have this experience. I believe that Common Ground deserves to be funded equally like any other public school because CGHS has achieved a lot over the years, and is ensuring the best possible future for its students.

Sincerely

Alicia Nixon